



SouthEastern Connecticut Enterprise Region

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Testimony of Stephen MacKenzie, Executive Director, Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region on H.B. No. 6367 **AN ACT CONCERNING A CHANGE TO THE BOUNDARIES OF THE GROTON-NEW LONDON AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT ZONE** before the Joint Committee on Transportation, Feb.11, 2015.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation to change the boundaries for the Airport Development Zone proposed for the Groton-New London Airport. In 2011, the Connecticut General Assembly passed legislation enabling the creation of Airport Development Zones (ADZ). While the legislation was intended to create a zone surrounding Bradley International Airport, it has since been modified to enable all General Aviation (GA) airports to adopt similar zones within a two mile radius of their respective airports.

The need for this legislation stems from Groton-New London Airport's location adjacent to Fishers Island Sound. Under the current legislation, a large portion of such a zone would be under water and undevelopable as a result. Groton and New London are proposing to shift the zone to the north, therefore making the airport the southern boundary of the zone as opposed to the center of the zone. This shift would also allow the zone to reach a greater portion of New London, thereby promoting and strengthening cooperation between the two municipalities and allowing both to benefit.

Southeastern Connecticut is lagging behind the rest of the state in the economic recovery and needs the economic stimulus that the ADZ would provide. Creating opportunities for cross-collaboration and support is crucial as New London and Groton both struggle to attract new capital and revitalize their urban centers. In 2011, seCTer prepared a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) which is approved by our Regional, State and Federal Governments. The 2014 update of CEDS identifies the creation of an ADZ, as well as related infrastructure improvements, at the Groton-New London airport. The CEDS, as well as the State and Regional Plans of Development all support development near transportation hubs.

Including the deep water port, rail and ferry stations, and the Foreign Trade Zone in New London in the ADZ will provide added leverage to implement at least seven projects identified in the CEDS, all of which support multiple industry clusters. I therefore urge you to support this legislation that will allow Groton, New London and the Southeastern Region to take advantage of the airport development zone designation in order to carry out the intended purposes, and better capitalize on the benefits of such a zone.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

C. Stephen MacKenzie,
Executive Director - Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region, Inc.